Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (Part 1)

THIS IS THE FIRST PART OF THE THREE PART ARTICLE SERIES ON CHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ. THIS ARTICLE IS IN CONTINUATION OF THE MAIN ARTICLE 'MARATHAS' AND ITS SUBSEQUENT ARTICLE 'ANCESTORS OF SHIVAJI'.

PIC: CHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ

Shivaji was the first Hindu king to have carved out an kingdom after a long hiatus in an Islamic Deccan.

Birth

Shivaji Bhosale was born on 19th February 1630 (though there are other claims about Shivajis birth date. Sir Jadunath Sarkar places Shivajis birth on 10 th April 1627) in fort Shivneri . He was named Shivaji after Shivai the Godess of the fort.Shivaji was the second child of Shahaji raje Bhosale and mother Jijabai (who hailed from the family of Jadhavs of Sindkhed). Apparently because of Shahajis shifting of loyalties, his father in law Lakhuji Jadhav was entrusted with orders for Shahajis immediate capture. He was surrounded at fort Mahuli. Shahajis wife Jijabai was then pregnant with Shivaji, hence she was sent for her safety to Fort Shivneri , which was under a relative Vijayrao Sidhoji Sriniwas Vishwasrao (who also later became the father in law of Shahajis brother, Sharifji).

Childhood and youth

Shahaji raje had served under various kingdoms like Nizamshah, the Mughals (briefly) and finally Adilshah of Bijapur. Adilshah had conferred on Shahaji the jagir (estate) of Banglur (Bangalore) and he stayed there with his second wife Tukabai (from the house of the Mohites. Shahaji had a son Vyankoji through Tukabai. Vyankohi later started the Thanjavur or Tanjore royal dynasty in present day Tamil Nadu) and their elder son Shambhuraje.
Jijabai along with young Shivaji , remained at Pune to manage Shahajis estates (between rivers Bhima and Nira namely the parganas of Puna,Chakan,Indapur,Shirwal and Supa). To supervise the affairs of the estate, a Deshastha Brahmin manager by the name of Dadoji Konddeo Gochivde Malthankar(also, later, Subhedar or administrative/military head of fort Kondana,as appointed by Adilshah in 1639) was deputed (1637).

Note: As per Marathi Riyasat by G.S.Sardesai and Shri Raja Shivchatrapati by Mehendale, Shahaji sired another son by his second wife,Tukabai Mohite, by the name of Koyaji raje and through Narsabai by the name of Santaji raje. Also there were children through his other concubines, namely Shivji,Pratapji and Hiroji (Farzand). Acknowledgements : Rajesh Khilari.

To assist him were trusted men of Shahaji like Sonopant the Dabir(envoy), Shamrao Nilkanth the Peshwa(chief minister),Balkrishnapant the Muzumdar(revenue minister),and Raghunath Bhat the Sabnis (chronicler and in charge of general adminstration), Banki Gaekwad, Gomaji Naik etc.
The jagir had various Deshmukhs , Deshpandes , Desais(regional chieftains and revenue collectors for the Sultan) like Khopde,Bandal,Jedhe,Maral,Silamkar etc. Some of them were often unruly and fought amongst themselves over trivial issues, besides terrorizing their village folk. Hence it was imperative to get these people under control. Some came willingly, for others there was use of force.
Note: Shivaji never trusted the loyalty of these Deshmukhs (barring a few like Kanhoji Jedhe) and we see that during Shivajis wars with Bijapur and the mughals, these Deshmukhs switched sides with relative ease. Hence Shivaji had to create his own army of loyalists, in order to reduce the dependence on these Deshmukhs.
The estate was in the mountainous area of the Sahyadri hill range. It was a dense forest region, infested by dacoits and wild animals like wolves,leopards etc. The people in that area were called Mavales (belonging to the Maval valley region. The valleys in Maval are Andar,Nane,Karyat,Gunjan,Hirdas,Pawan, towards Junnar are Shivner, Bhimmer, Ghodner etc) and were mainly peasants or shepards. The first thing Dadoji Kondeo did was to clear the region and make it secure and safe for farming.Earlier Adilshah had sent his commander Murar Jagdev to ravage Pune. After doing so, Murar Jagdev had tilled the farmlands of Pune with donkeys(as was the superstition in those days), rendering the land unfit for farming. But Dadoji Konddev made Shivaji till the land himself, to show the people, that it was all right to resume farming in Pune.
Dadoji brought in strong law and order (and established an strict and impartial justice system) to that region, thus making it more inhabitable and accessible. This brought forth a lot of goodwill of the people towards their new masters.
Dadoji constructed the town of Shivapur in 1636 (as per Jedhe Shakavali) and built the Lal Mahal for Jijabai and Shivaji to reside in.
Shivaji grew up in these free mountains, along with his 'Mavala' playmates. He was raised under the watchfull eye of his religious and independent minded mother Jijabai and the guidance of his guardian Dadoji Kondeo. Shivaji grew up on stories inspired by the epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata, as told by Jijabai.This may have instilled in Shivaji his religious and moral values which were to be seen later in his conduct as a king.

Education
Some historians like Sarkar state that Shivaji was unlettered. But that seems unlikely. Education for a nobles son was a necessity (especially in 'Marathi' his mother tongue and language of the land, 'Sanskrit ' the language of the religious texts,'Persian' the language of the Islamic courts, and subjects required to learn the administration of ones lands like Law,Mathematics, and Economics). Moreover , Shivaji was very sharp and intelligent as a child. Yes, he did ask his courtiers to read out letters for him in court (fuelling the above speculation), but it was a regular practise amongst the royals then to have their clerks or ministers read out letters in the court sent by various emissaries.
Shivaji was imparted training in the use of the talwar , dhal (sword & the shield),bhaalaa(the spear), the danda pattaa(a long sharp edged elastic steel sword) ,dhanushya baan(archery), the secret weapons like the khanjir/ bichwa (knife/dagger), waagh nakha (tiger claws) and other martial requisites like ghod sawaari (horse riding),malla yudh/ kusti (wrestling) etc. Dadoji Kondeo was also said to be an excellent swordsman and imparted the primary knowledge to young Shivaji.

Why Shivaji wanted independence?
This may have varied reasons. It may have something to do with the stories of valour he heard from his mother, about the traditional heroes like lord Rama , lord Krishna, Rana Pratap, Prithviraj Chauhan and even about his own father, Shahaji who ruled the old Nizamshahi as a regent for the young Nizam Murtuza and subdued many a powerfull enemy.
Shivaji may have looked at the old lands of the Nizamshahi , his father once ruled (though briefly),as his own backyard and fought to regain them.Some historians have concluded that Shivaji considered the Nizamshahi kingdom which was for sometime under the regency of his father Shahaji as his rightful right and resented the way his father was divested of that right by the coalition of Adilshahi and the Mughals . Shivaji wanted to take back what he thought rightfully belonged to him.After wresting a major part of that territory, he may have felt confident to take on the territory like Nasik,Aurangabad,Ahmednager which was in Mughal control (especially with the mughals being busy in their northern campaigns). Also he may have gauged that a confrontation with the mughals was inevitable as the mughal emperor Aurangzeb was himself vying the entire Deccan and the south for himself.
But it may also have something to do with the erratic behavior of the Sultans. The earlier Nizamshah of Ahmednagar had murdered Shivajis grandfather Lakhujirao Jadhav in cold blood. Jijabai must have sworn vengeance then, and instilled this anger in the young Shivaji. There was also an instance when the mughal commander Mahabbat Khans men had carried off the wife of Shivajis cousin (Kheloji) and held her to ransom. Some historians claim it was Jijabai herself and she was released from the Mughal camp by the efforts of either her brother or her uncle who were then a part of the Mughal army.
Also, sometime in 1644, Adilshah had accused Dadoji Kondeo (and probably Shahaji of being hands in glove with him) of impropriety and ordered the seizure of Shahajis Pune Jagirs and the hands of Dadoji Kondeo his vakil (lawyer/envoy) to be cut. Apparently Dadoji Kondev in his capacity as the subedar of Kondana, had removed certain officials like Sardar Ghorpade and Shaikh Mirad from their jobs and replaced them with his own men like Sardar Balkawde, Netaji Palkar and Mudgal Deshpande. These sacked officials further went and complained about the

same and raised doubts about Dadojis loyalty in the Sultans mind. (Dadoji was a temporary fugitive then). But soon these fears were assuaged and the order was revoked soon.
Note: It is said that Sardar Ghorpade later cut one of Dadojis hands for his perceived impudence.
But for sometime there must have been a feeling of insecurity in young Shivaji's mind and he must have longed for the security of his own impregnable fort, from where he can be protected against future attacks like these.
Moreover, the Hindus always felt like second class citizens in an Islamic kingdom. Though they wre entrusted with jagirs, they were never made Governors nor were they amongst the close courtiers of the Sultans. The hindus were always the 'jimmis' i.e non muslim subjects of a islamic state.
Though not regular, there were also instances of forcible conversions, descecration of temples and tyrannical behavior by some Muslim officials (especially those of foreign origin) who had a disregard (disrespect) for Hindu culture and religion. As per 'Busalatinussalatin (by Muhammed Ibrahim Ali Zubairi,source. Sarkar), it was a deliberate policy of Bijapur kingdom to keep its non muslim subjects suppressed. Shivaji must have resented this arrogance and felt alienated towards his muslim masters. This may have propelled in Shivaji a desire to have a kingdom, that the Hindus can consider their own.

Oath
Shivaji along with his mavla friends is said to have taken a blood oath to fight against the Islamic tyranny
(at Rohideshwara temple).

Note: But many historians claim this oath story seems apocryphal , more created as a part of the folk lore than on basis of evidence.
Note1: Earliest record of Shivajihaving dispensed justice was at the age of 14. He did so by punishing Babaji Gujar the patil of Ranza for rape (his hands and legs were severed and his estate/patilki confiscated).

Early conquests
In 1646, with the help of a small band of local Mavalas, Shivaji made his first conquest of fort Torna. He subdued the local Bijapuri commandant and seized the fort. He later named it Prachandgad. He found government treasure worth two lakh huns (gold coins). Buoyed by his success he made another acquisition in the form of fort Murumbgad. He renamed it Rajgad (40 km from Pune).The treasure he collected was used to streanthen the defences of the two forts.

The fort of Chakan (guarding the road of Puna from the north, around 40 kms from Pune) had been entrusted by Dadaji Kondeo to Firangoji Narsala. So it automatically came under the control of Shivaji. Next, Shivaji bribed Babuji Pant the commander of fort Kondana (dt.1647 as per Shivapur Deshpande Bahi and Muhammadnamah) and secured its possession (Kondana is about 40 kms from Pune city).
Dadaji Kondeo died in 1649.
Shirval also fell to Shivaji (its killedar Mian Rahim Muhammed had to flee).

Note: The Bijapur court understood that if an army was sent against Shivaji, it was possible that his father Shahaji

might rebel against them (as will Shivajis elder brother Sambhaji). Hence it was imperative that Shahaji was first put behind bars (and his sons were to be tackled separately).

In 1648, understanding the gravity of the situation, Sultan Adilshah of Bijapur ordered Fateh Khudavand Khan to put down Shivaji and appointed Kedarji Khopade of Bhor and Balaji Haibatrao to assist Fateh Khan in this endeavour.
Adilshah further instructed Farhad Khan and Tanaji Dure to capture Bangalore from the hands of Shambhuraje, Shahajis eldest son.
Simultaneously, Shahaji raje was also treacherously captured (at Jinji), by his own cousin Baji Ghorpade (under instructions from Mustafa khan the wazir and father in law of the sultan along with Jaswant rao Asad Khani). Afzal Khan was entrusted with the job of bring back Shahaji enchained to Bijapur and a eunuch was asked to attach his property in order to humiliate him.

The Bijapuri forces attacked both Bangalore and Shirval (near Pune). But both the valorous sons of Shahaji rose to the occasion and defeated their enemy.Shivajis forces routed Fateh Khan while his elder brother Sambhaji defeated the forces of Farid Khan.
Baji Pasalkar, a close aide of Shivaji, lost his life during the battle of Purander.

Shivajis forces consisted of his trusted captains like Kavji,Baji Jedhe (son of Kanhoji Jedhe, the Deshmukh of Kari , a follower of Shahaji),Baji Pasalkar (Deshmukh of Muse Khore),Godaji Jagtap,Bhimaji Wagh,Sambhaji Kate,Shivaji Ingle, Bhikaji Chor and his brother Bhairav (as written by Parmanand).

Shivaji then asked for Mughal help from Prince Murad Baksh the son of Shah Jahan (letter dt.1649) cleverly professing that tomorow if the mughals ever needed help from the Bhosales, they would definately oblige . This indirectly put pressure on the Bijapur camp and they were forced to release Shahaji.

Bijapur was shaken not only by the valour of of the Maratha forces but also by this machiavilian stroke by Shivaji. Bijapur now sought reconciliation. Shahaji was released from prison and given back his jagirs.Also, Shahaji on his part instructed Shivaji to return Kondana to the Bijapur officers.

Note: Shahaji though freed from prison was not allowed to leave the boundaries of Biapur almost for three and a half years. Shivaji decided to lay low for that time and utilise the period for restructuring his army. He also undertook several irrigation works, construction of roads to earn the goodwill of the populace. But the moment Shahaji was allowed to return to his jagir in Bangalore, Shivaji launched a surprise attack on the Adilshahi fort of Masur (near Dharwad).It was only to give a message to the sultan that the maratha power had not waned.

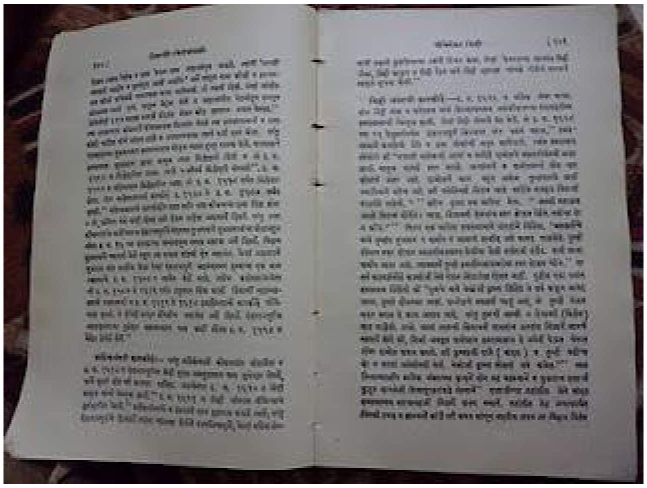
<u>SPECIAL NOTE (Contributed by Shree Karan Bandal):</u>

त्रिशकसँवत्सर शिव स्मारक ग्रथावाली शके १८५१

अनुक्रम २ खंड ३

शिवाजी निबंधावली २
पेज नंबर १०१
सन १६२४ मालिक अम्बर चे कान्होजी जेधे यांना पत्र कृष्णाजी बांदल यांच्यासाठी
सन १६२६ मालिक अम्बर वरला
फ़तेह खान व सिद्धि अम्बर यांच्यामधे वाद झाला
जेधे व बांदल हे शाहजी च्या गटातील होते .
शाहजी महाराज्यांच्या विज्यपुर्कारांच्या प्रवेशामुले जेधे बांदल त्या लढाई मधे सामिल झाले नाहीत.

यामधुन शाहजी महाराज व कृष्णाजी राजे बांदल यांचे सम्बन्ध स्पष्ट दिसतात.



Note: You can open the above pic in a different tab in order to get a magnified view.

Capture of Fort Purandar, 1654
Shivaji very well knew the importance of these mountain forts. Though the lands below were in the control of his father, his position against the enemy was very vulnerable.
After the submission of Fort Kondana to Adilshah, Shivaji was in need of another strong fort.
His eye fell upon Fort Purandar (Purandar is about forty kilometres south-east of Pune and some ten kilometres south-west of Saswad).
The commandant of the fort, Mahadji Nilkanth had just died.
Owing to his relations with Shahaji raje, Mahadji had earlier allowed Shivaji and his men to encamp at Purandar (at the *machi* i.e the plain ground midway between the base and the pinnacle) during the Bijapuri invasion.
Shivaji took charge of the fort of Purander by adequately compensating the sons of Mahadji Nilkanth [ref.Setu Madhavrao Pagadi].

However, historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his book 'Shivaji and his times' has a slightly different story to tell.
After Mahadji's death his sons, Niloji, Pilaji and Shankarji, started quarrelling amongst themselves over the issue of their inheritance. This was when Shivaji sensed an oppurtunity to take over Purandar and as luck would have it, circumstances started favouring Shivaji.
Mahadjis eldest son, Niloji had become the new fort administrator and was neglecting his brothers.

Shankarji implored Shivaji to intervene in their family dispute and give him his rightful inheritance. He was even willing to give Shivaji and his men access to the fort in return for his rights.
Thus with Shankarji's help, Shivaji surreptitiously took control of Fort Purandar without much bloodshed and enchained the fortkeeper Niloji.
However, when Shankarji refused to hand over the possession of the fort to Shivaji, he too was arrested along with his brothers. Eventually all the brothers were freed, after they agreed to comply with Shivaji's demands.
Shankarji was given the village of Chamli as his inheritance. Niloji was given the ancestral inam village as Nayakwar, and Pilaji was inducted into Shivaji's army as an high official (as per the family records which have been studied by V S Bhave).

Whatever may be the real story, the mighty Purandar was one of the early forts to have become a part of Shivaji's early inclusions.

[External link: http://www.maharashtratourism.gov.in/MTDC/HTML/MaharashtraTourism/Default.aspx?strpage=../MaharashtraTourism/TouristDelight/Forts/PurandarFort.htm]

JAVALI CAMPAIGN

Javali was a strategically important region. It was the gateway to the Konkan region. Javali was a densely forested area mainly comprising of eighteen valleys, called 'Khores'. It was a region traditionally ruled by the Mores (There are stories that More's were the descendents of the Somvanshi king More of Kashmir, while another version claims descent from the Mauryas of Magadh). They owed alliegence to the Adilshahi. Under the mores came the 'khores' of Jambhul,Jor,Shivthar,Kandat,Tam,Bamnoli,Atgaon,Chatwarbet,Solas etc.
The Mores had a clan head called 'Chandrarao'. The last Chandrarao More was Daulatrao. When he died he was issue less. Therefore Afzhal Khan, Adilshahs commander wanted to annex the More territory to the Adilshahi. So Daulatraos widow turned to Shivaji for help (her relatives also wanted to usurp the throne). Shivaji provided her military help to assert her authority and keep her relatives at bay.He also advised her to adopt a son who could rule Javli under her regency. So this person Yeshwantrao was adopted from within the clan (he belonged to the family of Mores of Shivthar. Incidently this Yeshwantrao was almost 35 at the time of his adoption and himself had two sons Bajirao and Krishnarao at the time of adoption).Shivaji promised them help against any external aggression.
Initially this Chandrarao More being indebted to Shivaji proffesed loyalty towards him. But later his tune changed (especially at the bidding of his diwan Hanmantrao More ref. Shivcharitra by Babasaheb Purandare). His attitude towards Shivajis officials (Raghunath Ballal Atre) and envoy too turned from polite to haughty.He even started showing disrespect towards Shivaji and refused to accept him as a king (the Mores had already established relations with Bijapur and felt empowered by their support). Mores forces even attacked Shivajis supporters like Gaekwads and Wadkars and created disturbances in Shivajis territories. He even gave refuge to a person accused of crime in Shivajis territory.
Shivaji taken aback by Chandraraos sudden arrogance, and decided to teach him a lesson, by annexing his territory.

It was a tough terrain, but Shivaji had local support in the form of Jedhes ,Bandals and Silimkars. On 27th January 1656, Shivaji attacked Javali. Chandrarao's chief agent Hanumantrao who was offering some resistance was also killed by Shivajis man Sambhaji Kavji and Raghunath Ballal Atre. Chandrarao escaped to fort Raigad, but Shivaji laid seige to it as well. Chandrarao was forced to sue for peace, which Shivaji accepted. But then Shivajis men caught secret correspondence between Chandrarao and the Ghorpades of Mudhol, who besides being Shivajis rivals and relatives ,were also Bijapurs officers.
Shivaji ordered the execution of Chandrarao More and Javali was annexed.

Note2: Murar Baji who had previously served with the Mores was to play an important role with Shivaji in the future (refer the battle of Purandar against the mughals).

Soon the forts of Wasota and Rairi were also in Shivajis hands. Now the central Konkan region comprising of Adilshahs provinces of Kalyan Bhivandi were practically isolated from rest of the Bijapur territory. The Kolaba district managed by the Siddis of Janjira were now within the reach of Shivaji.
Shivaji then instructed Moropant Pingale to construct a powerfull fort for Shivaji within the vicinity of Javali. That fort was named as Pratapgad.
Shivajis next acquisition was the fort of Rohida in May 1656.

Note: Baji Prabhu Deshpande the minister of the Baandals (who were earlier commandants of the fort of Rohida), later joined Shivaji, and played an important role in Shivajis career.(Refer the following para on the Battle of Pawan Khind).

Supa captured
Supa was being administered by Sambhaji Mohite, the brother of his step mother Tukabai who had become disliked for his corrupt ways. Shivaji arrested Mohite and took control of Supa in Sept 1656 and sent him in chains to Bangalore (to his father Shahaji).

Death of Muhmd.Adil Shah
Muhammed Adil Shah died on 4th November 1656 after a prolonged illness. The administration of the kingdom passed over to Badi Begum (who was the sister of Qutubshah of Golkunda). She ruled the sultanate on behalf of the young Ali Adilshah II.

Confrontation with the Mughals

The post Muhmd. Adilshah period was that of a turmoil in Bijapur. All his ministers were envious of each other and covertly plotted each others downfall. Afzal khan,Khan Muhammed,Fateh Khan,Ranadullah Khan,the pathan Bahlol Khan and his sons, the Maratha nobles : Shahaji raje ,Sarnobat ,Baji Ghorpade etc were all embroiled in political intrigues with Mir Jumla, the ex minister of Golkunda kingdom, who had defected to the mughals.

(These political intrigues later cost the lives of Muhammed Khan I Khanan in mysterious circumstances).
Even Shivaji had begun negotiations with the mughals in 1656, in case of an Bijapuri retaliation (especially after the invasion of Javli).
Prince Aurangzeb (who was then the viceroy of Deccan) had plans of capturing the south and wanted to start with Golkunda and Bijapur, hence he engaged the services of Mir Jumla, to correspond with these Bijapur nobles on his behalf. Some were seduced, but some refrained. Mir Jumla advised Aurangzeb to first attack Bijapur and then Golkunda.
Golkunda being the weaker of the two could have easily been surmounted at any time.
Note: Mir Jumla was an ex minister of Qutubshah of Golkunda
(Aurangzeb had therefore attacked and captured the Bijapur territory of Bidar on 29th March 1657 and now was facing Kalyani , which was 40 miles from Bidar).

Shah Jahan had already instructed Aurangzeb to capture the old Nizamshahi territories which included Poona (which was then in Shivajis control).
Shivaji feared a mughal attack. So he decided to strike the first blow (during this time Aurangzeb was busy with the northern politics). Shivaji attacked Junnar in May 1657. Junnar was a Mughal territory. It yielded Shivaji a large booty of 3 lakh honas and two hundred horses, besides jewelry. His men further raided the mughal controlled territory of Ahmednagar and captured seven hundred horses.
This went on while Aurangzeb was concentrating on Kalyani. (Kalyani fell to the mughals on 31st July 1657).
Aurangzeb felt outraged by Shivajis audacity and ordered his commanders Nasirikhan and Irajkhan to attack Shivajis forces at Ahmednagar(4th June 1657) and Junnar.
The Maratha forces had to withdraw.
Aurangzebs brother Dara feared Aurangzebs eminence will increase if he succeeds in the Karnatak campaign. Hence Shah Jahan on Daras bidding, ordered Aurangzebs men like Mahabat Khan,Nasirikhan,Rao Chatrasal to return back.
Exasperated, Aurangzeb had to make a treaty with Bijapur, whereby, they had to officially hand over Bidar,Kalyani ,Parenda and Konkan to the mughals.
Just as the treaty was being enforced, Shah Jahan fell ill on 6 th September 1657. Aurangzeb realising the time for power succession had come, returned back to Delhi.
Parenda remained with the Bijapuris and even Shivaji was left alone.
Shivaji seized this opportunity and attacked the Bijapuris. He captured Prabalgadh (in the vicinity of Matheran).
The other Bijapur forts to fall to Shivaji (in 1657) were Kondana (which was recaptured),Lohagadh ,Tikona, and Rajmachi (facing Konkan plains)

While Shivaji was busy fighting the Bijapuri and the mughal forces, his wife Saibai bore him his son, Sambhaji, on 14 th May 1657 at fort Purandar.

Konkan invasion

Shivaji then marched into Konkan (the coastal regions of Maharashtra). The Konkan invasion started with Kalyan. Bhiwandi,Tale,Ghosale,Surgadh,Birwadi,Sudhagad,Kangori,Aseri,Mahim Jawbar fell in quick succession.Upper Chaul was captured by November 1657.
The Siddis of Janjira (Siddi Fateh Khan) held bay at Kolaba on the behalf of Bijapur. Earlier in July 1657, Shivaji had dispatched Raghunath Ballal to take on the Siddi controlled Danda Rajapuri. The Sabhasad Chronicle states that Ballal captured Tale ,Ghosale and was marching right upto Rajapuri. But Raghunath Ballals unexpected death put a brake on Shivajis plans. In 1658, Shivaji dispatched Vyankoji Datto to Rajapuri. He put up a stiff fight with the Siddi and captured all his territory (Danda ,Raiuri) barring his castle at Janjira.

Note:During the seize of Janjira the Siddi was secretly helped by the Portuguese with arms and provisions.

Note 2: Shivaji was unable to capture the Janjira fort, hence he eventually built the fort Vijaydurg to act as his naval base. Similarly Shivajis son Sambhaji too failed to capture the impregnable Janjira and constructed a simmilar naval fort Kasi.

Shivaji meanwhile wanted to give the mughals the impression that he was in fact capturing Konkan for the mughals and in future was willing to accept Aurangzebs suzerainty. He even professed to send a large contingent to serve at the mughal court along with his envoy Sonaji Pant. In return, the request was, Shivaji be allowed to keep the captured domains of Bijapur. Shivaji was well aware of his own limitations . His army was very small compared to the mighty Mughal army. Hence Shivaji didn’t want to take on Bijapur forces and the Mughal forces at the same time.

Shivaji builds a Navy

After the acquisition of the coastal towns of Kalyan , Bhiwandi and Panvel, Shivaji envisioned an navy that will take on the navies of Bijapur and the mughals, and also facilitate his foreign trade.
For the same , some Portuguese ship builders helped him (probably secretly , fearing the wrath of the Siddi, the Bijapuri admiral and the Mughals). Though Shivaji officially maintained that it was to be used ostensibly against the Siddi, he secretly desired to reduce the influence of the Mughals,the Portuguese and the English, who had encamped in the coastal areas , and on the basis of their powerfull navy, they controlled the trade of the Arabian sea. But since the naval technology was only available with these European powers, he didn’t want to antagonize them also.
Maratha chronicles speak of Shivajis fleet having 700 vessels of various sizes and classes like Ghurabs (gun boats),Tarandis(large sailing vessels),Tarambes,Gallivats,Shibars (large vessel with two masts but no deck),Pagars(canoe),Manchwuas (large cargo boat with a single mast)....(English reports puts the figure down between 60-160.(barring ghurabs n gallivats, rest were used for mercantile purposes). Shivajis navy used to accompany and guard his trading vessels and his naval forts from European pirates.Note: Gallivats are large row boats built llike Ghurabs but of smaller dimension, largest rarely exceeding70 tons and had one sail only.

Limitations of Shivajis navy :

Shivajis navy was in its infant stage. Moreover the europeans were hesitant to supply any new technology to Shivaji (partly out of fearing mughal wrath and partly because they didnt want Shivaji's power to grow akin to his inland power).The marathas didnt even have regular access to gunpowder, as the sources to ‘saltpetere’ and ‘sulphur’ were inaccessible to the marathas. Shivaji's navy was also meant only for the coastal waters . It didnt have the capacity to attack warships and was based on knowhow supplied by the local fishing communities like the Kolis,Badhelas... Shivajis navy lacked the basic armoury required for warships. there were no cannon foundaries nor gunpowder.Whatever cannons ,Shivaji had, were the captured land ones (the lighter ones being used on his ships).

As a result Shivaji inspite of his ambitions couldnt better his naval power.Nevertheless, Shivaji because of his foresight and military genius realised the importance of the navy, and he made up with excellent fortifications which he built around the western coast e.g forts at Kalyan,Malvan,Vijaydurg,Sindhudurg etc.

Incursions in Karnataka

In 1657-58 - 59 , Shivaji conducted several raids in the southern region of Karnataka. This was the parent territory of Bijapur. The reason may not have been to capture land, but was more to suffice the growing needs of his expanding army.

Confrontation with Afzal Khan

The Queen mother of Bijapur, Bari begum was now getting worried of the growing power of Shivaji. She had requested Shahaji to rein in his son, but the latter had expressed his helplessness in the matter, stating the Shivaji was beyond his control and was his own man.

Then Afzal Khan (Abdullah Bhatari of Afzalpura village near Bijapur) took up the challenge of bringing Shivaji down to his knees. Afzal Khan was an old rival of Shahaji in the Bijapur court (Shahaji belonged to the rival camp of Ranadaulla Khan). He had also served as the governor of Wai and was well aware of the terrain. He was also said to be responsible for the death of Shahajis elder brother Shambhuraje , allegedly by treachery.

Note: Sambhaji(Senior) Bhosale or Shambhuraje : Shambhuraje was born at Verul (Ellora) near Aurangabad in 1619. He was the elder son of Shahaji and Jijabai. He was appointed jagirdar of Kolar (Karnataka). According to ‘Shedgaonkar bakhar’ his wife’s name was Makau/ Makai. He had two sons Suratsingh and Umaji(adopted son from Parsoji raje Bhamberkar).During the period of Raja Shivaji’s birth (around 1630) she was at Jinti (Near Daund ,near Pune).During the arrest of Shahaji by Adilshah, Sambhaji (Sr) had handled the responsibility of Banglore and successfully defeated Farhad Khan and Tanaji Dure..In 1654 Palegar of Kanakgiri named Aapakhan had revolted against Adilshah . Hence Afzalkhan and Sambhaji were deputed to take over Kanakgiri. However , Afzalkhan treacherously did not provide the timely help, and *Sambhaji lost his life in this battle (1654).*During the Afzalkhan incident at Pratapgad, incase of failure, Shivaji had planned to give state to Umaji, son of Elder brother Sambhaji, Umaji was 5 years old then. (Ref. ‘Chitnis Bakhar’ – edited by R V Herwadkar foot notes).After the death of Sambhaji (Sr) ,Kolar was continued as Jagir to Sambhajis son Suratsingh (Umajiraje - his mother was Jayantibai) and later by Shivaji during his Southern campaign.

Afzal Khan along with his huge army (consisting of a large cavalry of 10,000, 1200 camels and 65 elephants) marched on to the Maratha regions. He was joined by other Bijapur sardars like Ambar,Yaqut,Muse Khan,Hassan Pathan,Ranadullah Khan JR,AnkushKhan and Maratha

deshmukhs, chiefs like Ghorpade,Pandhare Naik,Kharate Naik, Kalyan Jadhav, Mambaji Bhosale, Jhujharrao Ghatage, Kedarji and Khandoji Khopade (who had crossed over from Shivajis side) etc.On his way (Pandharpur-Phaltan …here he arrested Bajaji Nimbalkar , brother in law of Shivaji and the deshmukh of Phaltan-Wai who was infact a employee of Bijapur, yet he was arrested and a news was generated that he would be killed. This was another ploy to provoke Shivaji) Afzal Khan pillaged towns, villages,destroying temples, murdering and ransacking at will. In order to antagonize Shivaji's religious sentiments and bring Shivaji out in an open confrontation, Afzal Khan desecrated the temples of Tuljapur and Pandharpur, defacing and destroying the deity idols.But Shivaji was too shrewd to fall to this ruse.

Note:Saibai, Shivajis wife and the mother of his eldest son Sambhaji had just died at Rajgad (on 5th September 1659) leaving Shivaji grief stricken.

Shivaji was well aware of his limitations and a pitched battle would have been suicidal. There was no way he could match the Khan's might man to man. So Shivaji cunningly professed his inability to fight the Khan. He sent peace overtures to the other side from his base Pratapgad. He managed to give the impression, that he is willing to negotiate on the Khans terms and in return his life should be spared. The same was conveyed to Afzal Khans emissary Krishnaji Bhasker. Shivaji had all the while refused to go to Wai to meet Afzal Khan stating fear for his life and insisted that Shivaji will talk surrender only if Afzal Khan meets him at Javli. The vain Afzal Khan took the bait.

Afzal Khan encamped at the foothills of fort Pratapgad (near Javli). A meeting was arranged between Shivaji and Afzal Khan at a distance from Afzals camp (on 30th November 1659).

It was agreed that the meeting would be unarmed, and each man was to bring ten personal bodyguards. Both were prepared for treachery.(Afzal Khan had the reputation of treacherously murdering his enemies under the pretext of negotiations viz Kasturi Ranga, Raja of Sera. Afzal was also involved in the murder of Khan Muhammed, the wazir of Bijapur and a rival in court. Shivajis lawyer Antaji Gopinath Bokil had also gathered news of the Khans nefarious plans from the royal camp itself).

Afzal hid a 'kataar'a small sharp edged dagger, in his coat. While, Shivaji wore an armour under his clothes, and carried a weapon called 'waagh nakha' (tiger claws), consisting of an iron finger-grip with four razor claws, which he concealed within his clenched fist and an hidden 'bichwa'(small dagger).

It was like a meeting between David and Goliath. While Shivaji was barely a five feet and a half, Afzal Khan was a giant of a man at six and a half feet and built like a mountain.

The two men entered the tent, fixed for the meeting, Afzal Khan pretended to greet Shivaji with a bear hug (even though there was no love lost between the two). He tried to grip Shivaji in an iron like vice and allegedly stabbed Shivaji in the back with his dagger. However Shivaji, was protected due to the armour under his coat. Shivaji opened his fist and disemboweled Khan with his tiger claws. In a swift movement he again wounded the giant Khan with his bichwa. Afzal managed to hold on to his bleeding abdomen and staggered outside. He moved towards his palanquin. But before he could escape, the Khan was decapitated by Sambhaji Kavji, one of Shivaji's bodyguards ('Sambhaji Kavji' - Refer note at the end of the paragraph). The Khans bodyguard Sayyed Banda (Bada Sayyad) struck Shivaji on his head with his sword.But Shivaji was saved because of the protective helmet inside his turban. Just as he was to strike the second blow, Shivaji aide Jiva Mahala chopped off Sayyed Bandas hand and then struck him down. Shivaji killed Krishnaji Bhasker, the assistant of Afzal Khan as he tried to block Shivajis way.

Shivaji and his men then rode back towards the fortress . A bugle was sounded. This was a predetermined signal to his men, which had been strategically placed in the densely covered valley. All of Shivaji's generals, including his Cavalry chief, Netaji Palkar, his Peshwa Moropant Pingale,Bandal and Shahajis trusted aide, Kanhoji Jedhe,the deshmukh of Kari (who had kept themselves camoflaged in the jungle of Pratapgad along with 5000 of his men, all ready for assault) launched swift and rapid attacks from all flanks and routed Afzal Khan's army.
Netaji Palkar pursued the fleeing forces and hacked them to the ground, before they could regroup with their reserve forces(which were stationed at Wai). Thus Afzal Khans forces were thouroughly defeated.
Afzal Khan's eldest son Fazal Khan ,barely managed to escape with his life (helped by Khandoji Khopade, the Deshmukh of Bhor).
Subsequently,an Afghan regiment of Bijapur was also decimated at Panhalgad.
After the Pratapgad encounter, Shivaji constructed a temple there, installing the idol of his godess Bhavani (made from the stone of river Gandaki).
This encounter with the great Khan became a subject of the local folklore and made an legend out of Shivaji.

Note: Chitnis bakhar (ref. Keluskar-Takakhav) mentions Sambhaji Kavji (Shivajis bodyguard) leaving Shivajis side in a fit of anger (after the king taunted him about his friend Babajirao having joined Shaistakhan) . Subsequently Sambhaji Kavji also joined ShaistaKhans mughal forces. But was killed in an encounter with Netaji Palkar (By Prataprao Gujar as per some versions like Marathi Daftar/ Shivajis souvenir .

Note:Though Afzal Khan was a religious bigot (he revelled in the fact that he was an sworn enemy of *kafirs* and a *buthshikhan* i.e destroyer of idols: as per his *shilalekh. ref. Babasaheb Purandare-Shivcharitrakathan*), he was also known for his good administration and fair sense of justice.Hence was a paradox. Shivaji after Afzal Khans death allowed his mazaar (tomb) to be built near fort Pratapgad perhaps out of respect for this cruel but valliant enemy.

Note: The mughal camp at Wai soon fell to the marathas . Wai was their gateway to southern maharashtra and Konkan. Soon a series of forts fell on the maratha lap in quick succession.

Note: Later Shivaji captured the treacherous Khandoji Khopde (who had helped Afzal Khan) and had his hand and leg chopped off (Shivaji spared Khopdes life at the request of his faithful Kanhoji Jedhe who put in a good word with the king for the sake of Khopdes family).

Battle of Kolhapur

To compensate the losses , Bijapur dispatched (28th December 1659) another general, Rustam e zaman (to assist him were Fazal Khan ,son of Afzal Khan, Malik Itibar,Fateh Khan son of Aziz Khan,Mullah Yahiya,Santaji Ghorpade and Sarjerao Ghatage too joined him), with ten thousand strong troops,but only to be humbled by Shivaji with half the army(Netaji Palkar,Bhimaji Hiraji Wagh,Ingle,Mahadik,Sidhoji Pawar,Gondaji Jagtap,Kharate and his son Hanumantrao,Pandhare,Siddi Hilal,Jadhav).
Note:Many historians have already alluded that Rustam e zaman and his father Ranadaullah Khan(Khan e zaman) having close proximity to Shahajiraje, were said to be always soft on his son Shivaji.

Battle of Pavan Khind

Shivaji added further salt to the Bijapur wounds, when he overran Satara and Sangli , and captured the forts of Chandan and Wandan and on 28th November 1659 took hold of fort Panhala. This time Bijapur decided to strike Shivaji with all its might. They made a deal with the Mughals whereby both the forces would together attack Shivaji. The mughals had also begun to get alarmed by Shivajis growing power. He was also encroaching on their territories. So they accepted the Bijapuri request for a joint attack on Shivaji.

But Shivaji did the unimaginable. His cavalry under Netaji Palkar rode right into the heart of Bijapur kingdom and demanded contributions from the towns of Belgaum and Dharwad. They laid seige on the suburb of Bijapur called Shahpur. Though this attack was warded of by Siddi Khawas Khan and his five thousand men, it sent a chill down the spine of Ali Adil Shah.Never before had he felt the enemy so close to him.

Meanwhile the troops of Bijapur led by the Abyssynian,Siddi Jauhar had laid seize on Fort Panhala, where Shivaji was present.He was assisted by many of the Bijapur sardars like Siddi Masud (son in law of Siddi Johar),Sayyad, Jaswantrao the raja of Pali,Suryajirao the raja of Shringarpur,Fazalkhan,BajiGhorpade,Pidnaik,Bhaikhan,Badekhan etc (ref.Shiv Bharat of Parmanand).

Note: Siddi Jauhar was also helped with ammuntion by the English officials (led by one Henry Revington) of the Rajapur factory, for which Shivaji punished them by later looting the same and imprisoning the officers for almost two years.

They encircled the fort on March 1660, making escape very difficult.He laid seige for months,thwarting attempts by Shivaji to escape the fort.Even an attempt by Shivajis general Netaji Palkar (along with his aide Siddi Hilal and his son Siddi Wahwa Khan) to attack Siddi Johars camp was foiled.

Note, Wahwa Khan was killed in that attempt.

Then Shivaji tried a different tactic. Shivaji knew Siddi Jauhar was a conceited person , and harboured secret designs about an independent kingdom. Shivaji therefore decided to cater to his ego. He sent several costly presents to Siddi Jauhar and even offered a surrender, provided Johar agreed to protect Shivaji from the wrath of Adilshah. Shivaji successfully managed to create an impression in Siddis camp that Shivaji was befriended, and willing to accept defeat. This made Siddi Johars army a little complacent. They let down their guard. Taking advantage of this situation , Shivaji managed to give the Siddi’s forces a slip.

He created a diversion whereby his look alike (a barber turned soldier called Shiva Kashid) was sent from one direction. Siddi Johars men chased and captured him, only to find that he was not Shivaji. Shiva Kashid was said to have been beheaded, but his sacrifice had given just enough time for Shivaji and his band to escape .

Meanwhile,Shivaji himself had set off in another direction, with his select band of 300 men (including his captain Baji Prabhu deshpande) and was heading towards fort Vishalgad. Siddis

army who were chasing Shivaji had caught upto him at a narrow mountain pass called 'Ghod Khind.'
But the brave men led by Baji Prabhu Deshpande (and his brother Phulaji Prabhu Deshpande) acted as a shield for their king, holding back the Siddi's army at Ghod khind . They sacrificed their lives in order to ensure a safe passage for their master. Shivaji reached Vishalgad (after a brief skirmish with Bijapuri soldiers led by Surve and Dalvi) and fired the cannon which was a signal to his men that he had reached his destination unharmed. The ballads passed down generations sing that, Baji Prabhu though fatally wounded, continued fighting like a man possessed , valorously, with a swirling 'dandapatta' (a long snake like malleable sword), with a spear, and later with swords in both hands, warding off the attackers , and continued resisting untill he heard the cannon fire signal from Vishalgad . Sensing his King had reached the fort safe and sound, he exhaled his final breath.

Note: Raiji Bandal (son of Baji Bandal, and grandson of Krishnaji Bandal) also fought alongside Baji Prabhu Deshpande (and his brother Phulaji Deshpande) and receieved a 'Taamrapatra' and honorary sword for his contribution post battle of Pawan Khind. - Reference provided by Shree Karan raje Bandal (descendent, Bandal family).

*see the image i (Karan) have attached ,which is in modi , actual this is deshmukhi stamp describing that the
taluka hirdas maval , raiji bin baji naik baandal deshmukh, fulaji and baji prabhu deshkulkarni stamp of baandals in devnagri date of that that mazahar was 21 march 1657- reference by Karan raje Bandal mail dt 1st Feb 2012*

Note:1.Shivaji further covered the distance from fort Vishalgad to fort Rajgad.
2.Siddi Jauhar was assisted secretly by the English factory officials (Henry Revington) of Rajapur in his seize of Panhala in the form of arms and ammunition.For this act Shivaji razed the Rajapur factory to the ground.
3. Sultan Ali of Bijapur suspected Siddi Johar of taking bribes from Shivaji and allowing him to escape (despite the fact that Siddi Johar had later taken Panhala) and castigated him in severe words. As a result of which he resigned from his service in disgust and went to his estate at Karnul. But the Sultan in order to punish him despatched a army to arrest him. Finally Siddi Johar consumed poisen and commited suicide. Later the Sultan re-engaged the services of Siddis son Aziz and his son in law Masud.

The mountain pass ,'Ghod Khind' where Baji Prabhu Deshpande and his men laid down their lives was renamed as 'Pawan Khind' or the 'Purified valley', purified by the blood shed by the martyrs.

Note: This encounter between the Siddis men and Baji Prabhu Deshpande has been compared to the famous battle of Thermopylae between the Greeks and the Persians.

Meanwhile Shivaji received the news that the mughal emperor Aurangzeb had sent his maternal uncle and the governor of Deccan, Shaista Khan to assist Bijapur in capturing Shivaji.

That’s when Shivaji realized that he may not be able to fight both his enemies simultaneously. So tactfully, he decided to make peace with Bijapur. Rustam e Zaman mediated between the two. Bijapur agreed to accept Shivaji as an independent king. In return he agreed to hand back fort Panhala to Bijapur.

Note: During this time Siddi Jauhar had also rebelled against Ali Adilshah, perhaps after an altercation over the issue of Shivajis . Also approaching were the Mughals. Hence, Ali Adilshah too was distracted , and hence was quick to make peace with Shivaji. Earlier Shivaji himself had circulated rumours in the Adilshahi camp that Siddi intentions of capturing power in Bijapur and had cleverly sowed the seeds of disensions between Bijapur and Siddi.

Now Shivaji was free to turn his sights towards the Mughal forces of Shaista Khan, who by now virtually unchecked, had entrenched themselves in Shivajis territories.